

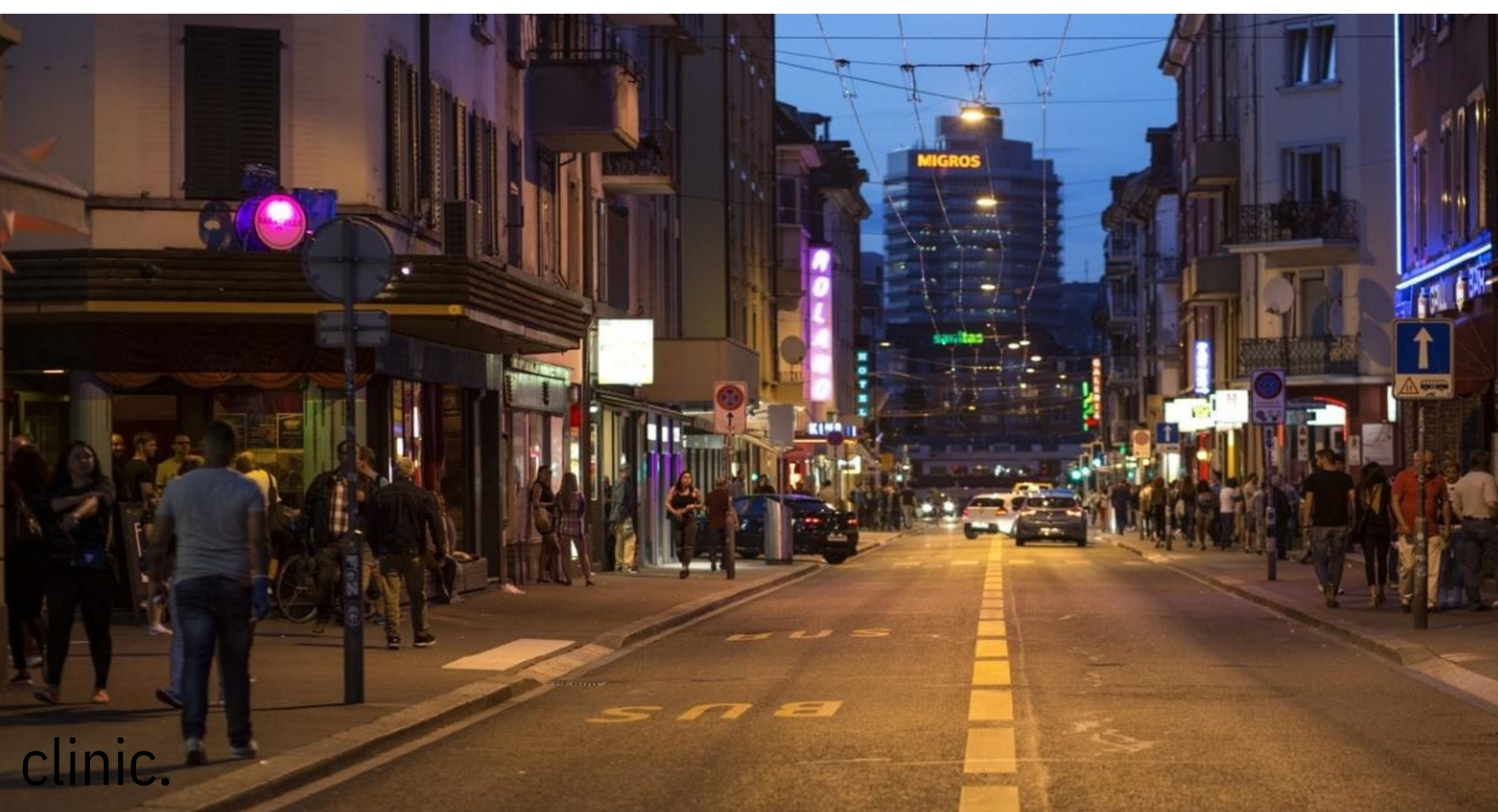
High acceptance of same-night PrEP start in a safer space for trans and male sex workers: the Night-Café

Benjamin Hampel^{1,2}; Luigi Guelfi²; Flores Real Jorge³; Benedict Zahno⁴; Jan Fehr¹

¹Department of Public and Global Health, Epidemiology, Biostatistics and Prevention Institute, University of Zurich, Zurich, Switzerland; ²Checkpoint Zurich, Zurich, Switzerland; ³Flora Dora, City of Zurich, Social department, Zurich, Switzerland; ⁴Isla Victoria, Solidaria Zurich, Zurich, Switzerland

Background: Trans and male sex workers have one of the highest risks of getting infected with HIV. However, the threshold to access PrEP is higher than in other populations.

Methods: Between January and July 2022 we offered monthly PrEP consultations and same-day PrEP prescription to trans and male sex workers within the Swiss PrEPared (1) program/cohort study at a social meeting point in the red light district of the city of Zurich: The Night Café. Sex-workers who were interested in PrEP could come to the café without an appointment. Translators for five different languages were available as well as social workers who could help with non-medical concerns. All participants who wanted to start PrEP on the same day received a fourth generation rapid HIV test. PrEP was prescribed, if the test was negative and if there was no sign for a kidney disease in the medical history. HIV PCR, kidney and liver tests, serology for Syphilis, Hepatitis B and C and PCR for chlamydia and gonorrhoea were performed and the results were discussed with the participants in the following week via phone. Data on sexual risk behavior were obtained through the Swiss PrEPared questionnaire, which the participants filled out prior to the consultation.



The night-café is located on Langstrasse, the red light district of Zurich

Results: During the six events 23 participants were enrolled in the program. Fourteen were cis-male of whom all identified as either homo- or bisexual. Eight participants were trans-women and one was a cis-women. Ten participants were already using PrEP, but were doing so without medical supervision. Two out of 23 participants reported to never have had an HIV test taken before and two reported that their last HIV test was longer than twelve months ago. Thirteen out of 15 participants (87%) have taken up their follow-up appointment at a sexual health



The night-café offers monthly walk in PrEP consultations for trans and male sex-workers with same-night PrEP start

Conclusion: Acceptance of PrEP consultation and follow-up rate was high in this population, when offered in this setting. Same-day PrEP start was safe in this preliminary pilot study. The project will be continued to be followed by the Swiss PrEPared study to generate more information on how to improve access to PrEP for male and trans sex-workers.

Reference: 1. Hovaguimian, et al. Participation, retention and uptake in a multicentre pre-exposure prophylaxis cohort using online, smartphone-compatible data collection. *HIV medicine*. 2021.